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C O N F I D E N T I A L MANAMA 000475

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E.O. 12958: DECL: 03/22/2016

TAGS: [PREL](#) [KPAL](#) [BA](#) [REGION](#) [BILAT](#)

SUBJECT: BAHRAIN: ARAB LEAGUE SUMMIT DEMARCHE

REF: STATE 45370

Classified by DCM Susan L. Ziadeh for reasons 1.4 (b) and (d).

1. (C) Pol/Econ Chief March 22 delivered reftel demarche concerning the Arab League summit to MFA Assistant Under Secretary for Coordination and Follow Up Shaikh Abdul Aziz

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bin Mubarak Al Khalifa. Shaikh Abdul Aziz noted that Foreign Minister Shaikh Khalid bin Ahmed Al Khalifa was in the United States and would go directly to Khartoum without returning to Bahrain. He pledged, however, to ensure that Shaikh Khalid received the information.

2. (C) Shaikh Abdul Aziz reacted only to the points on the Israeli-Palestinian situation. Noting that Hamas political chief Khalid Meshaal had met with Deputy Prime Minister Shaikh Mohammed bin Mubarak Al Khalifa a day earlier, Shaikh Abdul Aziz said "it was only a matter of time" before Hamas found a face-saving way to commit to recognizing Israel and respecting earlier agreements. Disarming would be a more difficult decision for Hamas. The outcome of the Israeli elections would be a factor in Hamas' timing. He agreed with the demarche point that a unified stance by Arab governments would help move Hamas in the right direction. Shaikh Abdul Aziz stated that these were his views only. They were not based on Shaikh Mohammed's meeting with Meshaal; he had not yet received a readout of that meeting.

3. (U) The press reports March 22 that Meshaal said during a press conference that Hamas would not recognize Israel despite international calls to seek peace. "We are asked to recognize Israel. We can do so but we will not, because that would lead to a double loss and would achieve nothing. Those who believe that negotiations and accepting the proposed conditions would lead us to get our rights are deluded." He said that none of the Arab leaders he had met so far had asked Hamas to recognize Israel. He requested pledges of Arab financial assistance at the AL summit.

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